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ABSTRACT

This brief presents national statistics to determine reasons for school personnel contacting parents of 12th-grade students. Data are from the National Education Longitudinal Study (NELS) of 1988, conducted by the United States Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. Parents of 12th-grade students reported they were more likely to be contacted by school personnel regarding the academic performance of their child than about their child's behavior. Private school personnel tended to contact parents of seniors to request volunteer service or to discuss the child's post-high school plans, while public school personnel tended to contact parents of seniors about their child's academic performance. Parents of white seniors were more likely than those of black, Hispanic, or Asian seniors to be asked to volunteer at school. School personnel were more likely to contact black parents than white or Hispanic parents to inform them how to help their child with school work. Parents of seniors in economically disadvantaged schools were more likely than parents of seniors in nondisadvantaged schools to be contacted about academic performance or academic programs. Parents in rural schools were the least likely to be contacted about attendance, and parents in urban schools were the least likely to be contacted by school personnel requesting parent volunteers. Parents who had a bachelor's degree or higher or whose children scored high on achievement tests were more likely to be called by school personnel regarding their child's post-high school plans and to be asked to volunteer than were other parents. (LMI)

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Types of contact between parents and school personnel

When school personnel and parents communicate, they establish a stronger learning environment for the student both at home and at school. Schools contact parents for many reasons, including when their child is experiencing academic or behavioral difficulties, when the teacher wishes to discuss future plans for the child, or when the school is looking for parent volunteers. It is important to determine whether parents are being contacted only when there is a problem at school, or if school personnel are striving to develop a strong line of communication with the parents.

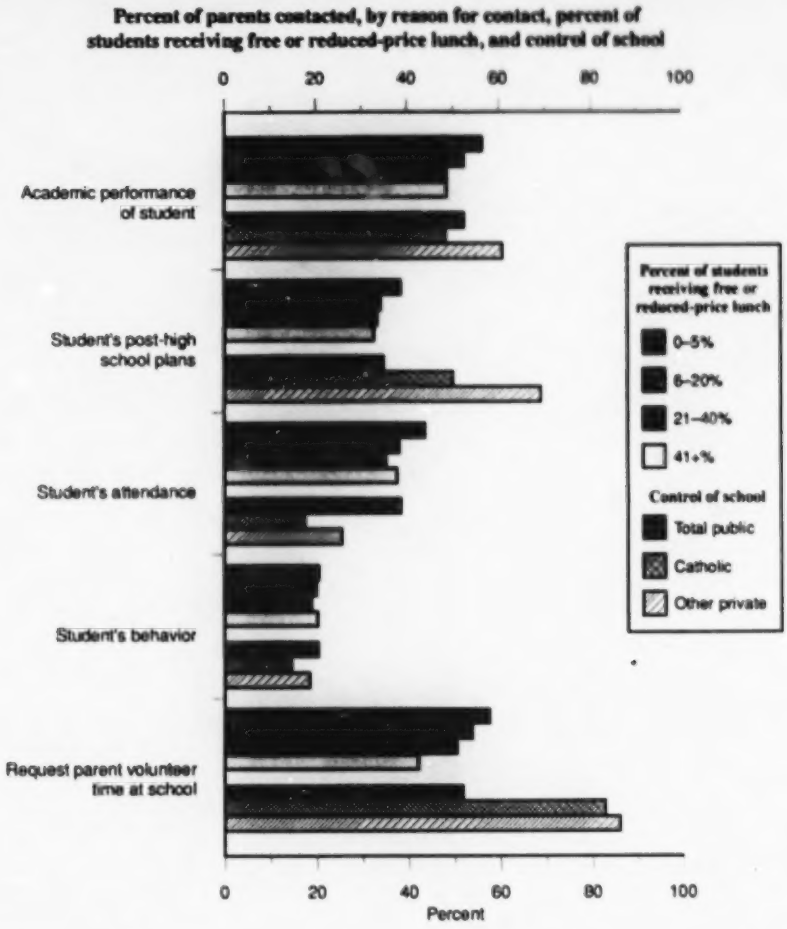
- **Parents of 12th-grade students reported that they were more likely to be contacted by school personnel regarding the academic performance of their child than about their child's behavior.**
- **Parents of seniors in private schools were more likely than their counterparts in public schools to be called to request volunteer services or to discuss their child's post-high school plans, while parents of public high school seniors were more likely to be contacted about their child's attendance.**
- **Parents of white seniors were more likely than those of black, Hispanic, or Asian seniors to be asked to volunteer at school. Black parents were more likely than white or Hispanic parents to be contacted by school personnel to inform them about helping their child with school work.**
- **Parents of seniors in schools with 41 percent or more of students receiving free or reduced-price lunch were more likely than parents of seniors in schools with less than 5 percent of students receiving free or reduced-price lunch to be contacted regarding their child's academic performance or academic program. Parents in rural schools were the least likely to be contacted about their child's attendance, and parents in urban schools were the least likely to be contacted by school personnel requesting parent volunteers.**
- **Parents who had a bachelor's degree or higher or whose child's achievement test scores were in the highest quartile were more likely to be called by school personnel regarding their child's post-high school plans and to be asked to volunteer at school than were other parents.**

Percentage of 12th-grade students whose parents reported that school personnel contacted them at least once during the current school year, by percent of students receiving free or reduced-price lunch in public schools, control of school, and reason for contact: 1992

		Percent of students receiving free or reduced-price lunch in public schools				Control of school		
Reason school personnel contacted parents	Total	0–5%	6–20%	21–41%	41+%	Public	Catholic	Other private
Discuss:								
Student's academic performance	52.7	56.5	52.5	48.8	48.8	52.5	48.5	60.8
Student's academic program	43.8	46.6	43.2	38.8	38.7	42.9	46.1	59.0
Student's post-high school plans	37.1	38.7	34.3	33.5	32.8	34.9	50.0	69.1
Student's attendance	37.0	43.9	38.3	35.3	37.8	38.7	17.5	25.7
Student's behavior	20.1	20.7	20.1	19.1	20.4	20.5	14.6	18.5
Request parent volunteer time at school	55.0	57.8	54.0	50.7	42.4	51.9	82.9	86.2
Inform parents how to help student with school work	22.3	24.2	20.7	20.0	18.6	21.5	29.3	31.8

SOURCE: U. S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988, Second Follow-up, (1992) Parent Survey.

Percentage of 12th-grade students whose parents reported that school personnel contacted them at least once during the current school year for various reasons: 1992



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988, Second Follow-up, Parent Survey, 1992.

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